



No 287 Rs.

The Pious Cat and other tales



C.M. Vitankar

ANIMAL TALES FROM RAJASTHAN

THE PIOUS CAT

There are many who love to tell a story and many more who love to listen to one. And each time a story is retold, it acquires a new colour and a fresh dimension.

The grandmother who heard a story as a little girl from her grandmother, tells the same story to her grandchild but with a few embellishments of her own. The traveller from a distant land who happens to hear a story in the course of his travels, later tells it to his own people, modifying it to make it more dramatic or more acceptable to his audience. That is how stories which had first been told centuries ago have been kept alive and why we find recurring themes in the tales told in different regions separated by hundreds of miles.

This Amar Chitra Katha retells three folktales from Rajasthan.

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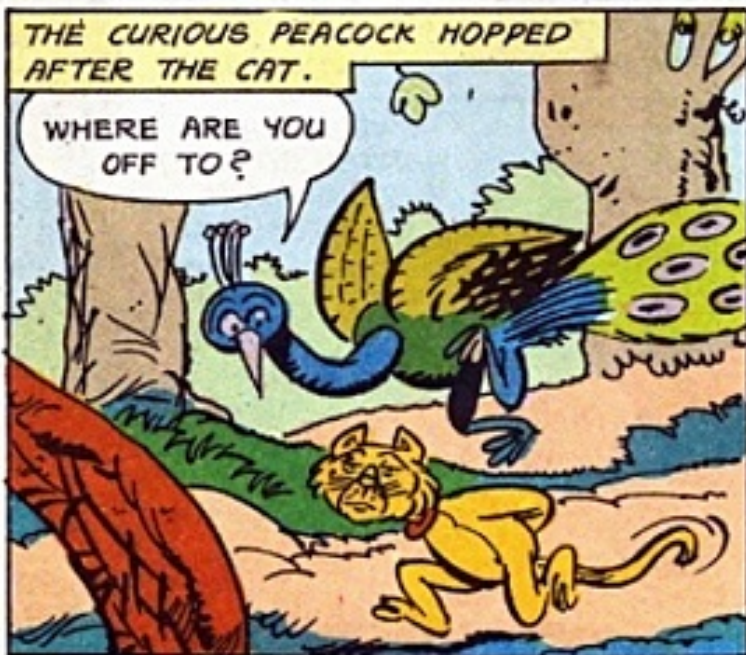
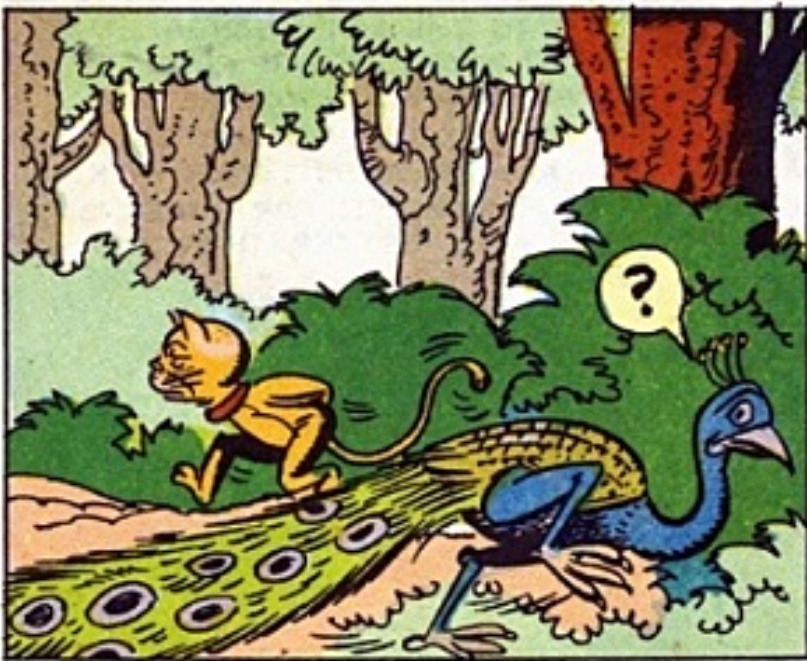
THE PIOUS CAT



A HUNGRY CAT ONCE STOLE INTO A FARMER'S KITCHEN.







HE FLEW AFTER THEM.

WHERE ARE
YOU OFF
TO?



TO THE HOLY GANGA.
TO WASH OFF OUR PAST.
FOR BY THIS NECKLACE OF
LORD KEDAR I'VE VOWED
TO GIVE UP SIN! COME WITH
US, BROTHER, FOR THREE IS
BETTER THAN TWO.



I'LL COME. OH, I'LL
COME TOO! TOGETHER
WE'LL BATHE IN THE
HOLY GANGA.



A LITTLE FURTHER AWAY THEY MET A
MOUSE. WHEN HE HEARD WHERE THEY
WERE GOING —

I'VE ALWAYS
WANTED TO GO ON
A PILGRIMAGE. I'LL
GO WITH YOU.

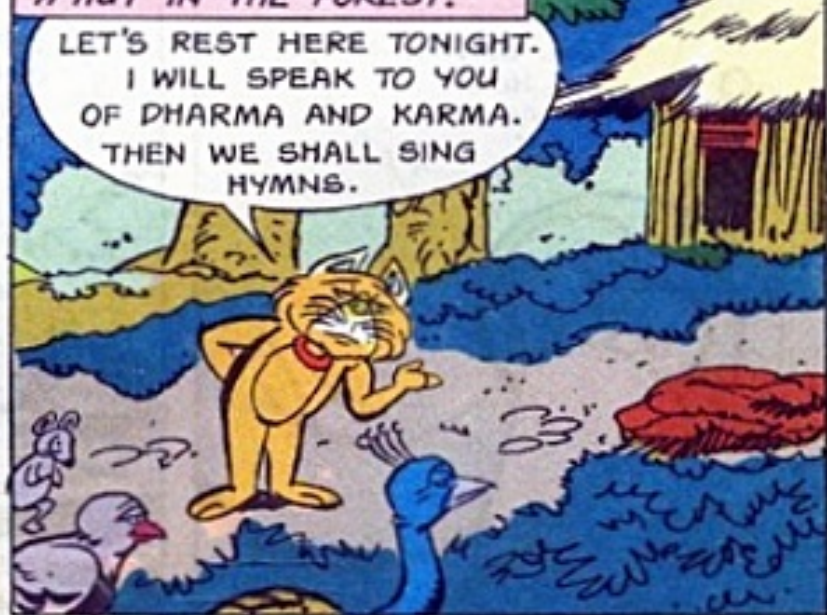


SO THE CAT, THE PEACOCK, THE PIGEON
AND THE MOUSE JOURNEYED ON...



...TILL AT NIGHTFALL, THEY CAME UPON
A HUT IN THE FOREST.

LET'S REST HERE TONIGHT.
I WILL SPEAK TO YOU
OF DHARMA AND KARMA.
THEN WE SHALL SING
HYMNS.



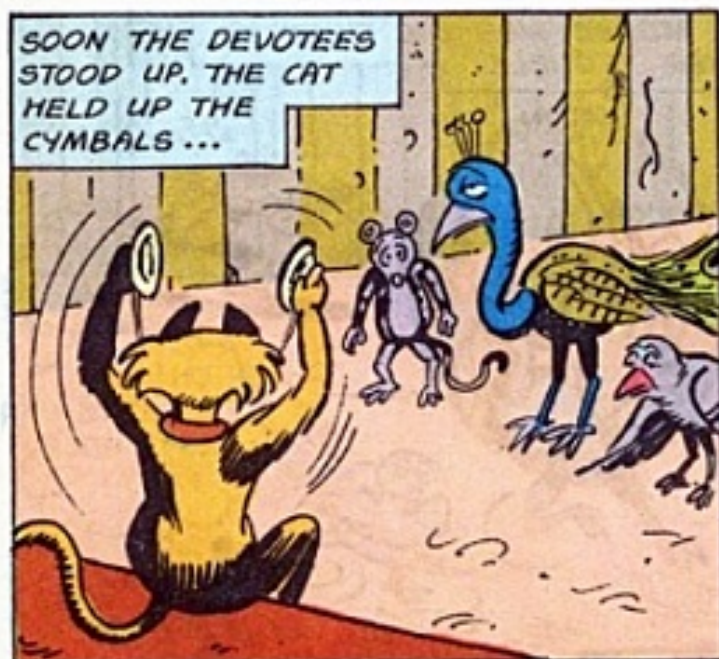
IT IS OUR DUTY
TO PROTECT THE
LIVING. TO KILL
IS SINFUL...



THE CAT PREACHED ON. BUT HER
MIND WAS ON OTHER THINGS.



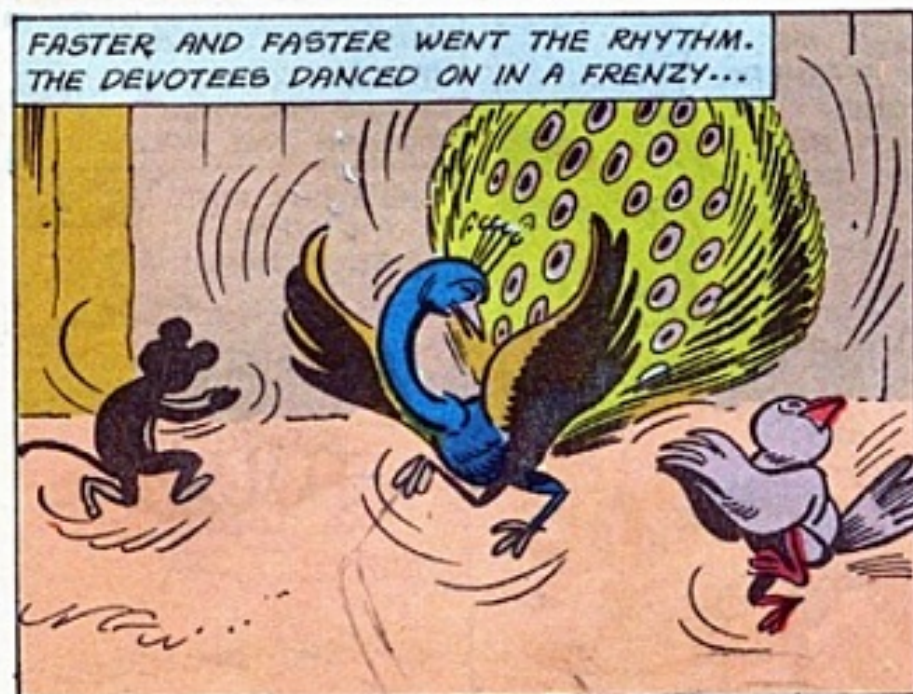
SOON THE DEVOTEES
STOOD UP. THE CAT
HELD UP THE
CYMBALS...



...AND BEGAN CLANG-
ING THEM RHYTHMICALLY.
THE DEVOTEES BEGAN
TO DANCE.



FASTER AND FASTER WENT THE RHYTHM.
THE DEVOTEES DANCED ON IN A FRENZY...



...WHILE THE CAT'S
EYES WERE
BLOOD-SHOT AS
SHE DRIBBLED.



SUDDENLY, THE CAT JUMPED DOWN FROM THE PLATFORM...



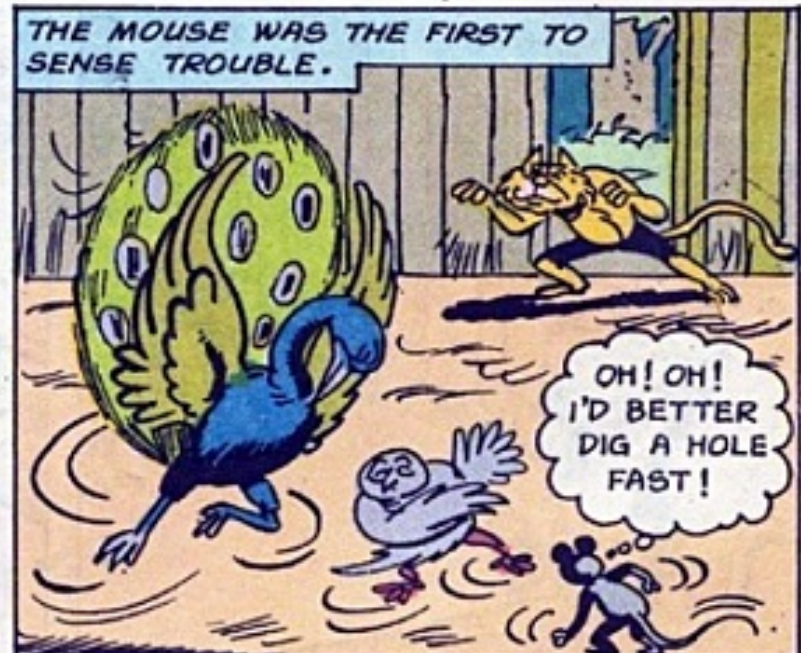
... DANCED UP TO THE ENTRANCE...



...AND BLOCKED IT. THEN SHE DROPPED THE CYMBALS TO THE FLOOR.



THE MOUSE WAS THE FIRST TO SENSE TROUBLE.



YOU VAIN PEACOCK! WHOM WOULD YOU WOO WITH THAT DISPLAY OF FEATHERS?



GOD GAVE ME THESE FEATHERS, HOLY ONE. I CANNOT BUT DISPLAY THEM. I... I...



WHILE THE CAT BAITED THE PEACOCK THE MOUSE FINISHED DIGGING THE HOLE.

SHE'S OUT FOR THE POOR PIGEON NOW.





BEFORE SHE COULD RECOVER, THE PEACOCK AND THE PIGEON QUICKLY FLEW THROUGH THE DOOR...



...TO A TREE OUTSIDE.



THE CAT DASHED OUT AFTER THEM, BUT IT WAS TOO LATE.



SO BACK SHE WENT INTO THE HUT.



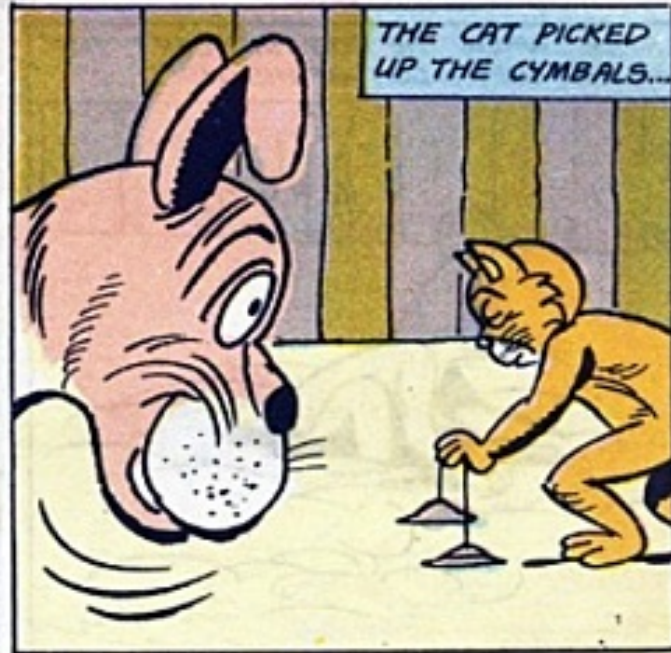
OF COURSE! I AM YOUR NEPHEW! BUT I DON'T WANT YOUR GOLD.



JUST THEN
A DOG ENTERED
THE HUT.



THE CAT PICKED
UP THE CYMBALS...



...AND ADJUSTED HER
EARTHEN ORNAMENT.



THEN —



BUT THE DOG WAS NO FOOL.



WITH THAT HE SPRANG ON THE CAT...



LATER, WHEN THE DOG HAD LEFT, THE MOUSE CREEPT OUT OF HIS HOLE.



ALL THAT WAS LEFT OF THE CAT WAS THE RIM OF THE BROKEN POT.



HE DRAGGED IT OUT OF THE HUT...




...AND SHOWED IT TO THE PEACOCK AND THE PIGEON.

LOOK, AUNTY HAS SENT YOU THIS RELIC OF LORD KEDAR.

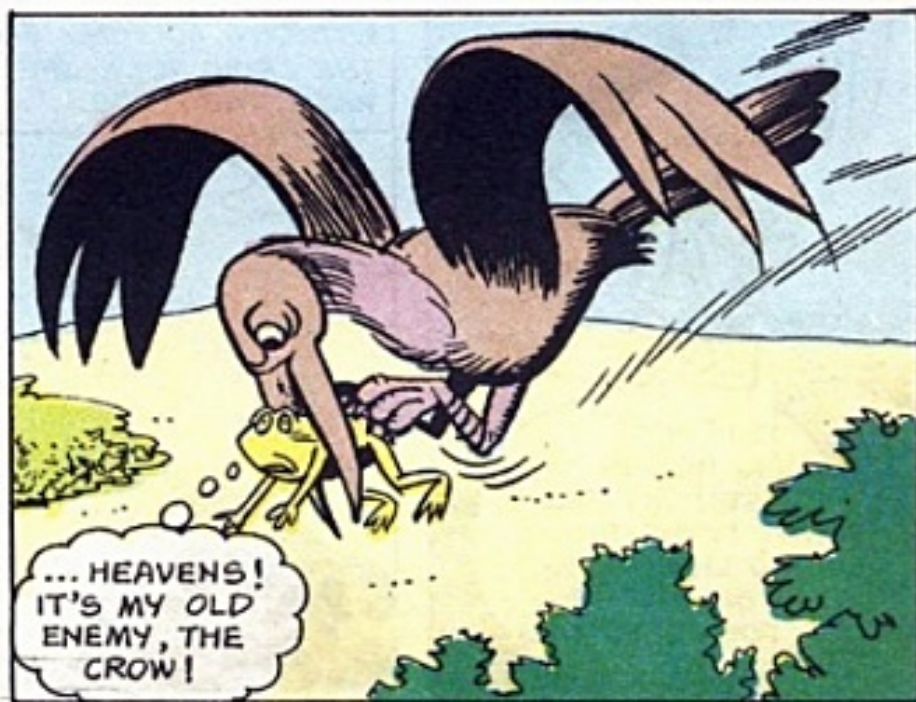
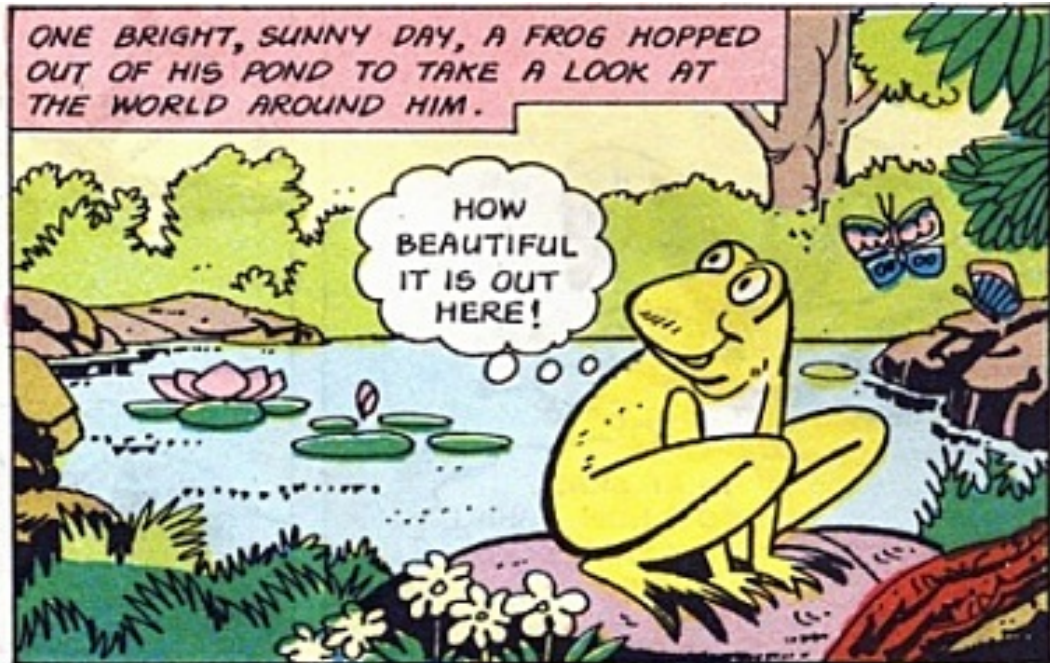


NEVER AGAIN DID THE THREE FEEL THE URGE TO GO ON A PILGRIMAGE.

THE QUICK- WITTED FROG



ONE BRIGHT, SUNNY DAY, A FROG HOPPED OUT OF HIS POND TO TAKE A LOOK AT THE WORLD AROUND HIM.





AT LAST —

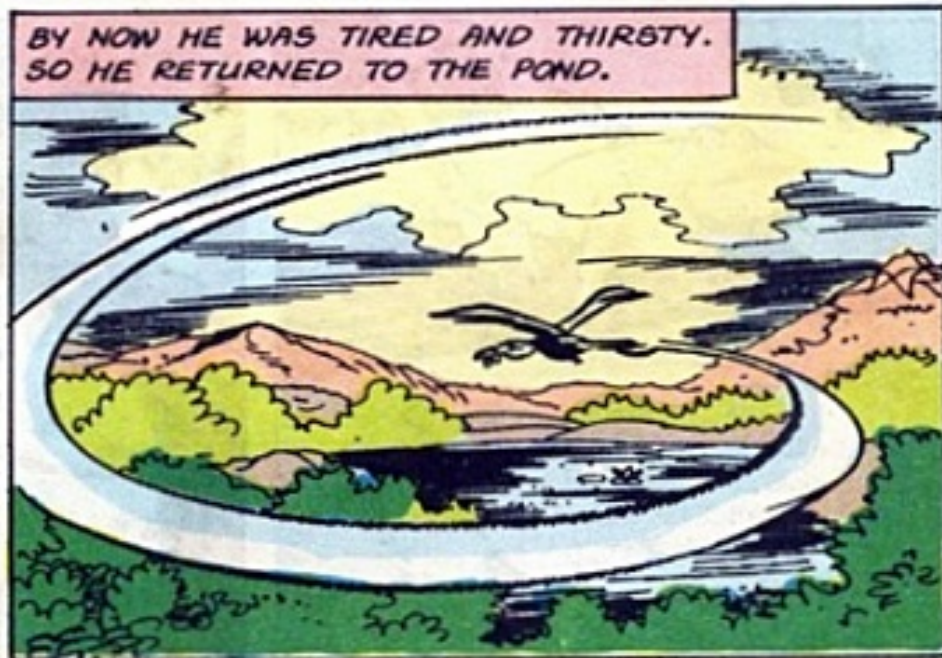


THE FROG WAS BEGINNING TO ENJOY HIMSELF.



AFTER GETTING OVER HIS FRIGHT, THE CROW ALIGHTED ON AN IMAGE OF THE GODDESS KALI.





A tale from Rajasthan

A king once appointed a poor weaver as his diwan. Powerful, high-born courtiers who had themselves coveted the post, did not conceal their displeasure. One of them was even bold enough to openly question the royal decision. He demanded that the low-born man's fitness for the post be proved. So confident of his choice was the king, that he readily agreed. The courtiers set the test and the Diwan was summoned.



"My friend, though now my Diwan, you were born a weaver.

I want you to weave me a robe of the finest gossamer. If you can't have it ready within a fortnight, you will be banished from the kingdom."

One look at the courtiers was enough for the Diwan. He knew who was behind this impossible demand. He was quiet for a moment. Then he said, "Maharaj, weaving gossamer robes is child's play for me. But you will have to provide me with one or two things before I can begin."

"Name them and they shall be given to you," declared the king.

"Well...first, I need some ash of water. Will you ask your courtiers to set fire to the palace tank and get me the ash?"

"Are you mad? How can we set fire to water?" cried the courtiers.

"Well if I can weave a gossamer robe, surely you can set fire to water!" came the reply.

The king burst out laughing and hanging their heads in shame the courtiers acknowledged defeat.

Do you know of any such rare anecdote of your region?

Send it to us. For every accepted anecdote (300-500 words), we will pay you Rs. 50/-. Send a self-addressed stamped envelope if you want the story to be returned. Mail your story to

The Editor

Amar Chitra Katha - 'Hidden Gems' Section

Mahalaxmi Chambers (Basement) 22 Bhulabhai Desai Road Bombay-400 026.



AMAR CHITRA KATHA

Rules :

1. The first fifty all-correct entries will each win a prize of Rs. 10
2. The remaining all-correct entries will each win a colourful picture post card.
3. The decision of the judges is final and binding.
4. Mail your entries, (entry form given alongside) to :

AMAR CHITRA KATHA QUIZ CONTEST
Post Bag No. 16542
Cumballa Hill P.O., Bombay 400 026.

Quiz Contest 8

A

HERE IS A PANCHATANTRA STORY IN PICTURES. THE PICTURES ARE JUMBLED UP AND TWO IMPORTANT PICTURES ARE MISSING. DESCRIBE THE TWO MISSING PICTURES.



THE ANGRY FARMER AND HIS MEN CHARGED AT THE DONKEY AND BEAT HIM TO DEATH.



AN HOUR LATER, WHEN THE FARMER AND HIS MEN CAME TO MAKE THEIR USUAL ROUNDS —



ONE DAY, AS HE WAS RETURNING HOME THROUGH A THICK JUNGLE, THE DONKEY STUMBLED UNDER ITS LOAD, SO WEAK HAD IT BECOME.



B

WHAT IS THE MAJOR MISTAKE IN THIS PICTURE OF KUMBHA ADDRESSING HIS SUBJECTS AS SOON AS HE WAS CROWNED RANA OF CHITTOR?



SOLUTIONS TO A C K QUIZ No. 7

- A. 1) Rani Abbakka
2) Kannagi
- B. Savitri. The other two were
won by their suitors.
- C. 1 and F 3 and D
2 and G 4 and E

C

WHAT IS THIS
INSTRUMENT
CALLED?



A C K QUIZ No. 8

ENTRY FORM

Name : _____

Age : _____

Address : _____

State : _____

Pin Code : _____

MY SOLUTIONS

A _____

B _____

C _____

The last date for receiving
entries : 30.6.1983

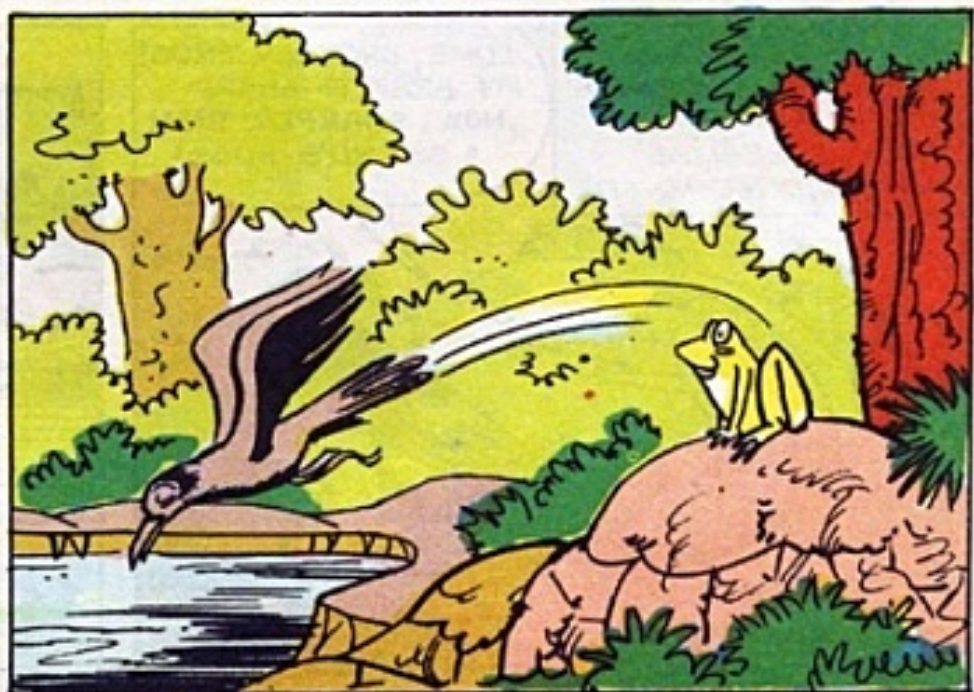
"Hurray, hurray, it's a holiday
Hurray, hurray, it's time to play
So get your pail and your beachball
And don't forget Gems for one and all!"



Got a moment? Get a Gem!

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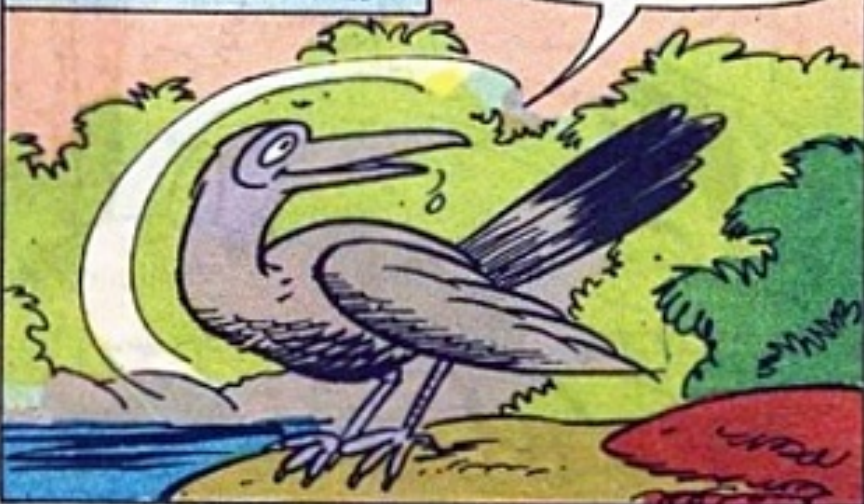


MEANWHILE, THE CROW WAS HAPPILY SHARPENING HIS BEAK THINKING ONLY OF THE MEAL AWAITING HIM.



BUT THERE WAS NO ANSWER! HE TURNED ROUND AND STILL DID NOT REALISE WHAT HAD HAPPENED.

COME, BROTHER FROG! MY BEAK IS SHARP NOW, SHARPER THAN A SWORD'S EDGE!



A DEER STORY



A CART LADEN WITH HAY WAS BEING DRIVEN UP A FOREST PATH AT FULL SPEED, WHEN SUDDENLY —



HE JERKED THE REINS AND JUST MANAGED TO AVOID RUNNING OVER THE DEER.



DEAR SISTER, I CAN SEE YOU ARE NOT WELL. BUT PLEASE MOVE AND LET ME PASS.



BROTHER, I AM GOING TO BE A MOTHER. PLEASE HELP ME.



THE CARTER WAS A KIND-HEARTED MAN.

WHAT HELP DO YOU NEED, SISTER?





THIS CARTER TOO, JUST MANAGED TO STOP HIS CART IN TIME. HE WAS VERY ANGRY.



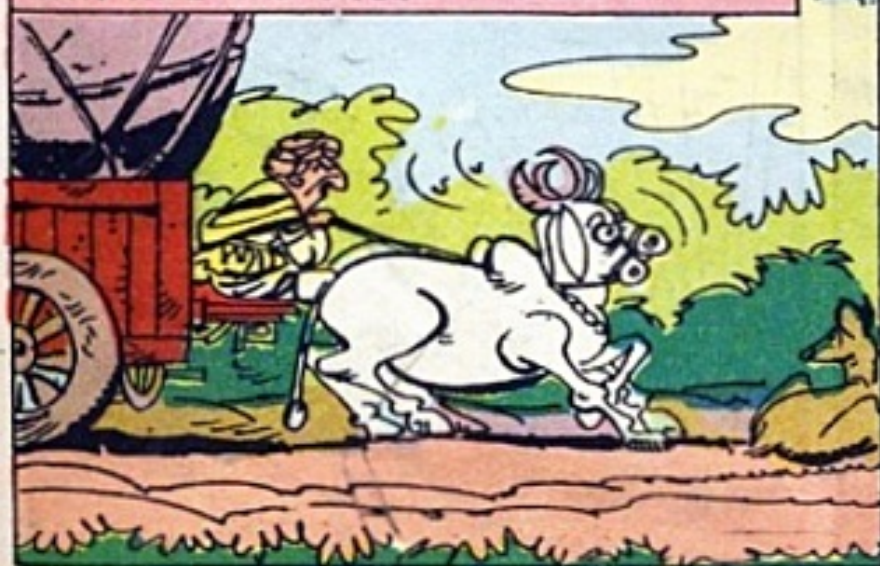
MY BABIES WILL SOON BE BORN. A GOOD MAN GAVE ME A CART-LOAD OF HAY TO BUILD A HUT BUT IT HAS NO DOOR.



THE DEER FIXED THE DOOR IN PLACE AND SHUT IT.



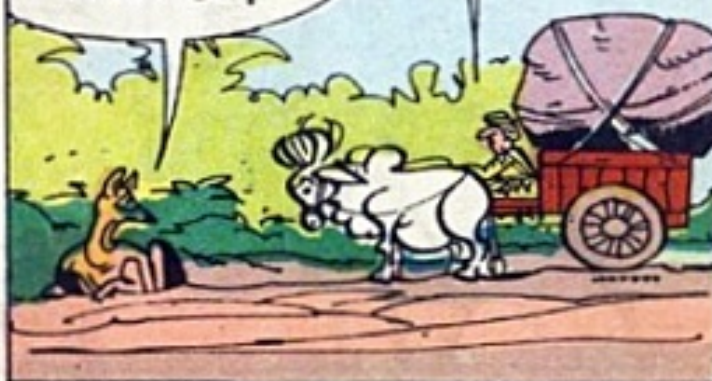
THEN SHE WENT AND LAY DOWN IN HER USUAL PLACE. THIS TIME A CART LADEN WITH RICE AND JAGGERY CAME BY.



SHE TOLD THE DRIVER HER STORY.

...AND NOW, IF I HAD RICE AND JAGGERY TO PLASTER THE WALLS AND FLOOR, HOW COSY MY LITTLE HOUSE WOULD BE!

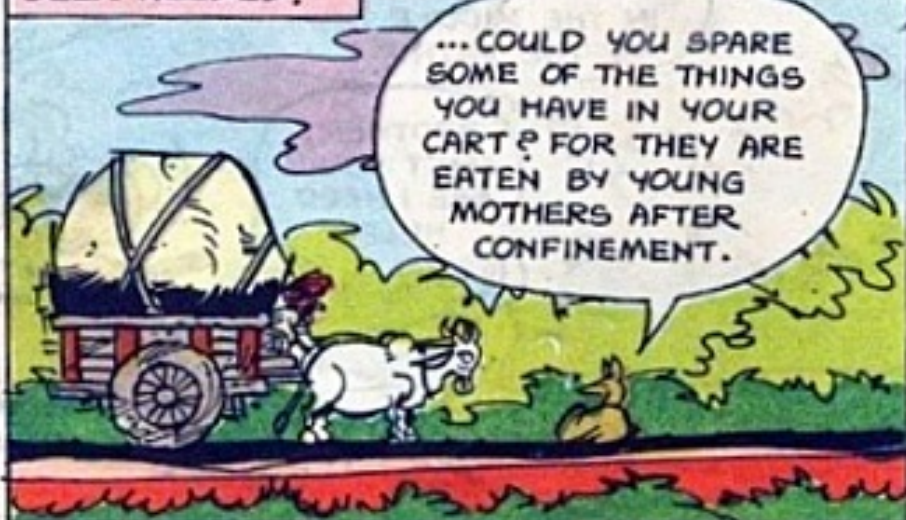
YOU SHALL HAVE THE RICE AND JAGGERY.



THE DEER SET TO WORK AND HAVING PLASTERED THE WALLS AND FLOOR WITH RICE AND JAGGERY WENT BACK TO HER USUAL PLACE.



WHO SHOULD COME BY NEXT BUT A CARTER WITH A CART-LOAD OF SUGAR, GHEE, DRIED GINGER, GUM AND ANISEED. JUST THE THINGS OUR DEER NEEDED!



WHY SOME, DEAR SISTER? I'LL GIVE YOU ENOUGH TO LAST 400 MONTHS.



THANK YOU! I WILL PRAY THAT YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN PROSPER!



THE DEER WAS NOW VERY HAPPY. ALTHOUGH SHE WAS ALONE IN THE WORLD AND LIVED IN THE MIDDLE OF A FOREST FAR FROM ALL HER RELATIVES, SHE HAD EVERYTHING SHE NEEDED.



SOON AFTER, FOUR LITTLE FAWNS WERE BORN.



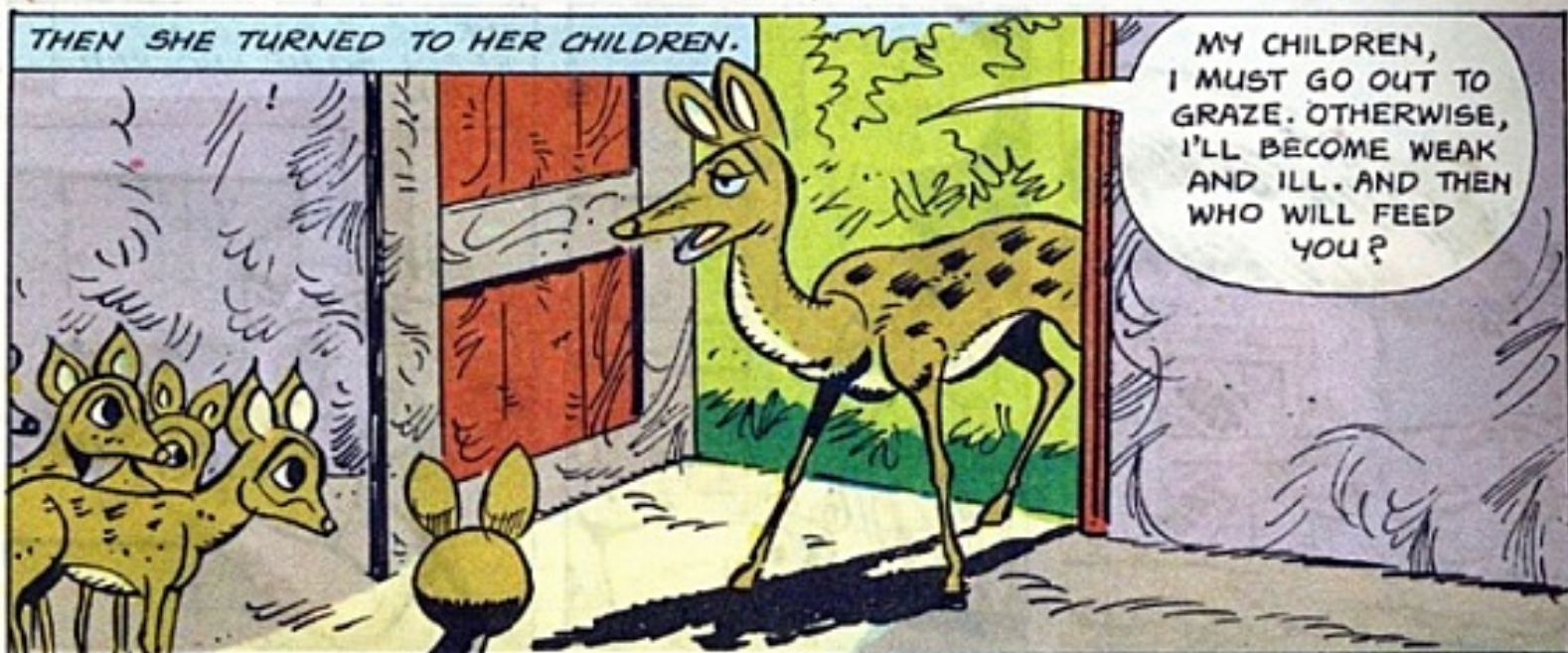
FOR FORTY DAYS SHE STAYED WITH THEM IN THE HUT. SHE ATE THE FOOD SHE HAD STORED AND TENDERLY NURSED HER LITTLE ONES.



AT THE END OF THE FORTY DAYS SHE BATHED AND WORSHIPPED THE SUN.



THEN SHE TURNED TO HER CHILDREN.



SO LISTEN TO ME CAREFULLY. DON'T LET ANYONE COME IN WHEN I AM AWAY, AND ALL WILL BE WELL.



WE WILL BE VERY CAREFUL, MOTHER. WE WON'T OPEN THE DOOR TO ANYONE BUT YOU.



JUST THEN A LAME WOLF HAPPENED
TO PASS BY.

HM! LOVELY
LITTLE
ONES...

AHH
SHE HAS
GONE!
GOOD!

WHO
IS
THERE?

THE WOLF DARED NOT
REPLY. SO HE KNOCKED
AGAIN.

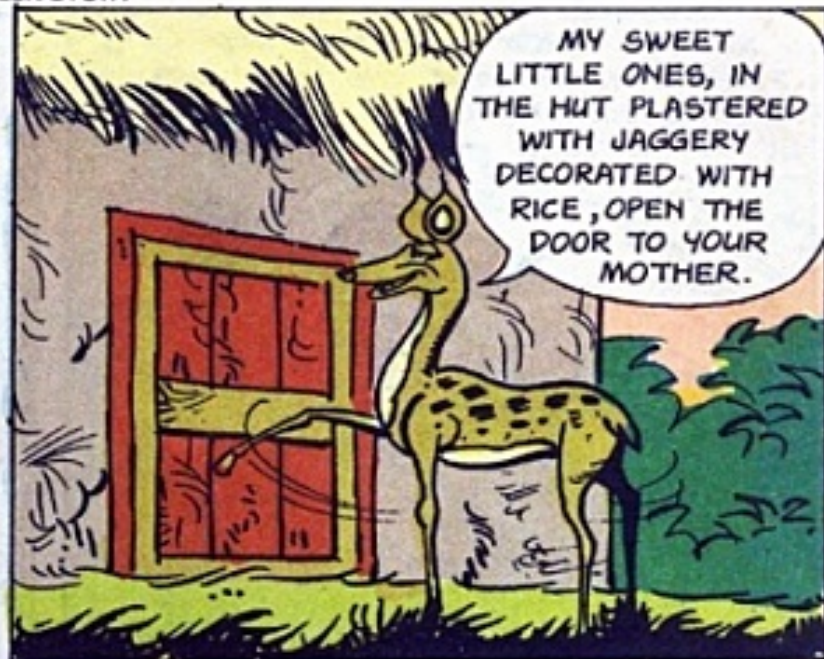
YOU CAN'T BE
OUR MOTHER.
GO AWAY.

THEY THINK
THEY'RE TOO
SMART. H-M-M.
WE'LL SEE.

IN THE EVENING, HE HID IN THE BUSHES AND AWAITED THE MOTHER'S RETURN.



MY SWEET LITTLE ONES, IN THE HUT PLASTERED WITH JAGGERY DECORATED WITH RICE, OPEN THE DOOR TO YOUR MOTHER.



THEY OPENED THE DOOR IMMEDIATELY.



SO HAPPY WERE THEY TO SEE HER THAT THEY FORGOT TO TELL HER OF THE EARLIER VISITOR.

THE NEXT MORNING —

AHH... SHE'S LEAVING.



HE WAITED FOR A WHILE AND THEN WENT UP TO THE DOOR.

MY SWEET LITTLE ONES, IN THE HUT PLASTERED WITH JAGGERY DECORATED WITH RICE, OPEN THE DOOR TO YOUR MOTHER.



THE CHILDREN WERE ABOUT TO OPEN THE DOOR WHEN SUDDENLY A SWEET, MELODIOUS VOICE CALLED OUT A WARNING.

DON'T, CHILDREN! DON'T OPEN THE DOOR! IT'S THE LAME WOLF OUTSIDE, NOT YOUR MOTHER!



IT WAS A SAFFRON PLANT THAT HAD CALLED OUT TO THEM. THE WOLF WAS FURIOUS. HE PULLED THE PLANT OUT BY ITS ROOTS...



...AND WENT BACK TO THE DOOR.



MY SWEET LITTLE ONES, IN THE HUT PLASTERED WITH JAGGERY DECORATED WITH RICE, OPEN THE DOOR TO YOUR MOTHER.

AGAIN, THEY WERE ABOUT TO OPEN THE DOOR WHEN —



DON'T, CHILDREN, DON'T! IT'S ONLY THE BAD, LAME WOLF!

YOU...!

SEETHING WITH RAGE THE WOLF BURN'T THE SAFFRON PLANT, MIXED THE ASHES WITH WATER AND DRANK UP THE MIXTURE.

MEANWHILE, INSIDE THE HUT —



I WISH MOTHER WOULD COME SOON!

A FEW MINUTES LATER —



MY SWEET LITTLE ONES, I....

THAT VOICE AGAIN!

ISN'T THAT MOTHER?





AS HE FELL, HIS STOMACH BURST OPEN AND ...



... OUT POPPED THE FOUR PRETTY, YOUNG FAWNS AND A FRESH GREEN SAFFRON PLANT.



THE DEER TENDERLY BATHED AND FED THEM AND TOOK THEM HOME.



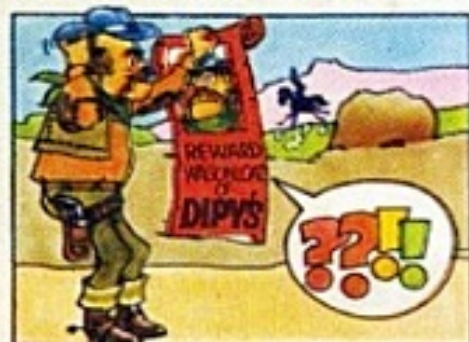
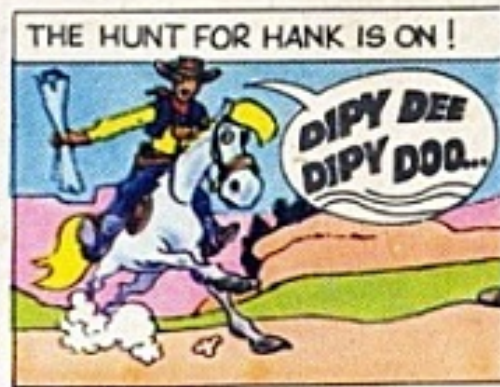
SHE PLANTED THE SAFFRON IN ITS OLD PLACE.



AND EVERY DAY SHE WATERED IT WITH SWEETENED MILK.



AS FOR THE WICKED, LAME WOLF, HE WAS NEVER HEARD OF AGAIN.



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